

The South Yuba River Project is unique in the California State Park System: along the South Yuba River Canyon from Englebright Reservoir below Bridgeport into the Tahoe National Forest, it is a 20 mile patchwork of lands under several jurisdictions. Historically, this area is a treasure trove. Trails, scenic vistas of fast water boiling over massive granite ledges, historic toll crossings and bridges all tell a story of day-to-day life during the Gold Rush era. California State Parks owns some 2000 acres along the South Fork of the Yuba River, and approximately 9000 acres are under federal jurisdiction. Much of the remaining land along this part of the river is under private ownership. It is **important to respect the rights of these property owners.**

Along this 20 mile portion of the south fork of the Yuba River, visitors may pan for gold or explore the trails leading to such historic mining sites as the Miner's Tunnel or Jones Bar. Hikers have a choice ranging in difficulty from the South Yuba Independence Trail — the first identified wheelchair-accessible wilderness trail in the country — to other more strenuous trails.

In the rough-and tumble days of the Gold Rush period, a miner might put his life in jeopardy by stepping over the line between his claim and the next one. Today we are free to explore, fish, swim and peacefully enjoy the natural beauty of the surroundings. Access to some features of the South Yuba River Project may be limited. **Visitors are advised to inquire concerning difficulty of passage before setting out on a trail leading to some historic sites.**

California State Park Information

For information about State Park hours of operation, fees, annual passes or specific park regulations, you may contact your nearest State Park. Please check the front of your telephone directory under State Government, Department of Parks and Recreation.

For general State Park information, contact the Public Affairs Office at P.O. Box 942896, Sacramento, CA 94296-0001 or call (916)653-6995.

For camping reservations call DESTINET at (800)444-7275.

For a catalog of State Park merchandise or for a listing of all State Park publications and videos, write to California State Parks Store, P.O. Box 942896, Sacramento, CA 94296-0001 or call (916)653-4000.



CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

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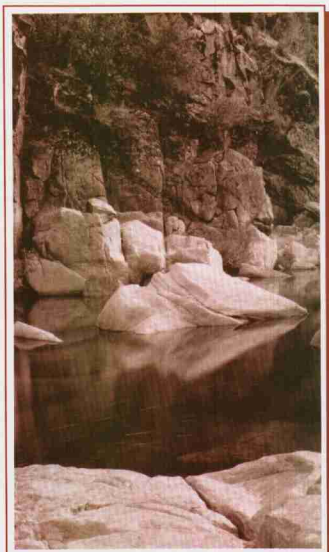
South Yuba River Project
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3/96

This brochure has been accomplished through the efforts of the South Yuba River Park Association and California State Parks.

For more information on the South Yuba River Park Association, call 916/423-2546.

South Yuba River Project



CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS



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HISTORIC SITES

Bridgeport Mining Camp (ca. 1850)

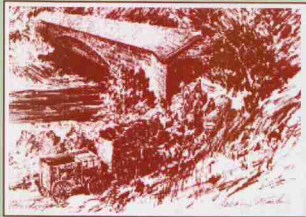
Bridgeport was a mining camp, stage stop and working ranch. This stretch of the South Yuba River was the site of some of the richest placer deposits of the Gold Rush. Later hydraulic mining contributed to the closure of the Kneebone Resort located upstream from the Bridgeport Covered Bridge during the 1930s, when illegal debris from the resumption of hydraulic mining fouled the river. Descendants of the pioneer Kneebones still visit and care for the family cemetery.



Team driven by Andrew Kneebone

Virginia Turnpike (1855-1901) Many features of this 14 mile toll road may still be found in the immediate vicinity of Bridgeport. **Excelsior Mining Ditch (1855-1961)** This former mining and irrigation ditch is now the site of a wheelchair accessible trail whose gentle configuration provides the wilderness trail experience to 6,000 visitors annually. **Hoyt Crossing (ca. 1850)** Located near the upstream end of Miner's Tunnel. **Illinois Crossing (1854)** Site of a ferry that operated until the first bridge was built at Edwards Crossing. **Miner's Tunnel (ca. 1872)** A 600 foot hard rock tunnel used to divert the heavy water flows from the parallel section of river which was high in gold rich gravels. **North Bloomfield Drain Tunnel (1873)** An 8000 foot hard rock tunnel built to extract gold from hydraulically mined materials.

BRIDGES



Bridge at Bridgeport - drawing by George Mathis

The **Bridgeport Covered Bridge (1862)** Built in 1862, the style of its construction — a wooden arch visible from the outside as well as the inside of the bridge — may have been taken from plans or designs prepared in 1804 by Theodore Burr for a bridge across the Hudson River. Protected by sugar pine shakes, the venerable 251 foot structure (including wingwalls) is thought to be the longest single span covered bridge in existence. River access is easy from here. **Purdon Crossing Bridge (1895)** A unique half-through truss support system makes this early metal structure the only one of its kind known to exist in California. **Edwards Crossing Bridge (1904)** This handsome 114 foot bridge with its unusual three-hinged metal arch, triangular members and steel pins was built by the American Bridge Company. It is considered a "sister" to the Gault Bridge in Nevada City, built a year later by the same company. **Highway 49 Bridge (1921)** An early cement bridge of rare arch-type construction, it is a good spot to view the river

and gain access to the water. **Jones Bar (ca. 1850)** Although none still exist, at least four bridges have spanned this location. Parts of this former wagon road between Nevada City and North San Juan are still identifiable within the river canyon.

PLANT AND ANIMAL LIFE

A rich variety of wildlife, including deer, rabbits, skunks and raccoons, inhabits this region, with an occasional bear, coyote, mountain lion or bobcat. Birdwatchers may enjoy the sight of such species as wild turkeys, woodpeckers, hawks, eagles and waterfowl, as well as numerous songbirds. Fishing is good along the lower sections of Humbug Creek and the South Yuba River near Englebright Reservoir. Springtime yields some spectacular displays of wildflowers to grace the riverbanks and secluded waterfalls. You may spot bush lupine, monkey flower, California poppy, Indian pink, fairy lantern, honeysuckle, yarrow, iris, many varieties of sweet pea or the occasional tiger lily. Canyon live oak, gray pine, California black oak, Douglas fir and other deciduous and evergreen trees flourish here, while underbrush species include manzanita, mock orange, gooseberry, mountain mahogany and wood fern. Since **poison oak** is a natural, important part of the thriving underbrush, hikers must learn to recognize and avoid this plant.

INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS

The wildflowers of spring are a great attraction along the Yuba River, and on Sundays from mid-March through early May volunteers conduct guided walks. On Saturdays and Sundays from mid-May through September, join volunteer docents for activities related to the natural, cultural and historical background of the area. Enjoy demonstrations of gold panning and history talks or tour the famous Bridgeport Covered Bridge. School groups and other groups are encouraged to contact the park to schedule group tours. Please call the park at (916) 432-2546 for schedule information and for information concerning degree of difficulty of hiking trails.

GENERAL RECREATION

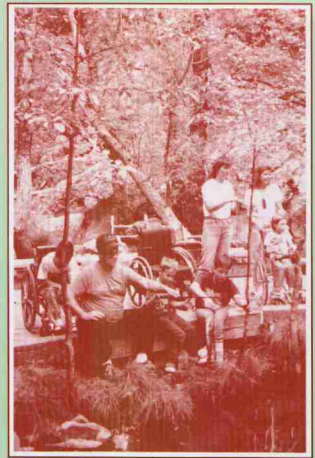
Fishing along the lower sections of the South Yuba River will yield smallmouth bass, squawfish and suckers, as well as the occasional rainbow or brown trout. Fishing is better during midsummer and fall, when winter run-out is not as dangerous.

Hiking trails along the south fork of the Yuba River vary from totally accessible to fairly strenuous. Before setting out, check on the length and difficulty of the trail, and carry drinking water.

View the river from various vantage points: the Highway 49 Bridge; through the breezy side windows of the Bridgeport Covered Bridge; at the Purdon and Edwards Crossing Bridges; at many spots along the hiking trails.

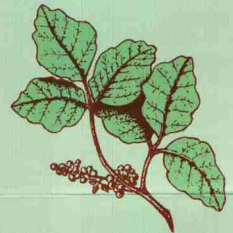
Swimming is best during midsummer and fall, when the river is warmer and flows at lower, safer levels. **SWIMMING IS NOT RECOMMENDED IN COLD, FAST-MOVING WATER.**

Whitewater kayaking between the town of Washington and Purdon Crossing is best during wet years, when the river flow is high and the tributaries are full. These rapids are ranked from Class 3 (difficult - for experienced only) to Class 6 (utmost difficulty - team of experts only, taking every precaution). Please call the park for further information.



Visitors enjoying the Independence Trail

BE AWARE!



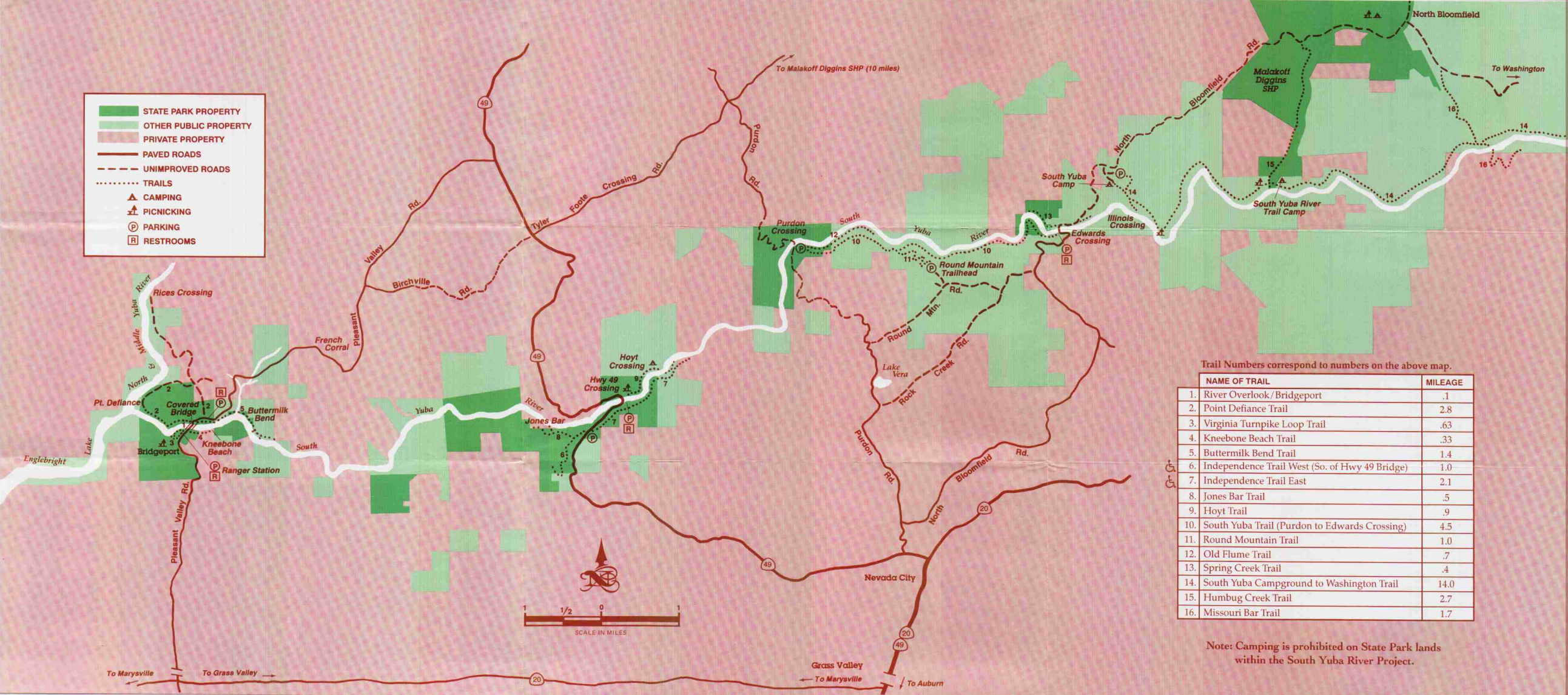
POISON OAK, a plant that is prevalent throughout the park, has an oily substance on its leaves and a juice that is highly irritating to the skin. Note carefully the shape of the leaves which turn from a shiny green in the spring to rich orange and red in the fall. You can best avoid contact with it by staying on the designated trails and in the regular camping/picnicking areas. If you or your children are not sure what poison oak looks like, ask a ranger to identify it so you can avoid it.

TIPS

- Alcoholic beverages and glass containers are prohibited.
- Make sure you are in proper physical condition for the trail you plan to hike.
- Drinking water is only available at the Bridgeport Ranger Station.
- Be aware of location of restroom facilities.
- Dogs must be on a 6-foot leash.
- Fires are prohibited.
- Camping is prohibited on State Park lands within the South Yuba River Project.
- All natural and cultural features are protected by law and may not be removed or altered.
- Firearms are prohibited.
- No diving/No lifeguards on duty.
- Respect private property - stay on trails.
- Gold-panning is allowed on all South Yuba River public lands. **Hands and pans only, on State Park property.**

Cover photo by David Hennessey, showing the Yuba River near the end of Buttermill Bend Trail out of Bridgeport.

STATE PARK PROPERTY
 OTHER PUBLIC PROPERTY
 PRIVATE PROPERTY
 PAVED ROADS
 UNIMPROVED ROADS
 TRAILS
 CAMPING
 PICNICKING
P PARKING
R RESTROOMS



Trail Numbers correspond to numbers on the above map.

NAME OF TRAIL	MILEAGE
1. River Overlook/ Bridgeport	.1
2. Point Defiance Trail	2.8
3. Virginia Turnpike Loop Trail	.63
4. Kneebone Beach Trail	.33
5. Buttermilk Bend Trail	1.4
6. Independence Trail West (So. of Hwy 49 Bridge)	1.0
7. Independence Trail East	2.1
8. Jones Bar Trail	.5
9. Hoyt Trail	.9
10. South Yuba Trail (Purdon to Edwards Crossing)	4.5
11. Round Mountain Trail	1.0
12. Old Flume Trail	.7
13. Spring Creek Trail	.4
14. South Yuba Campground to Washington Trail	14.0
15. Humbug Creek Trail	2.7
16. Missouri Bar Trail	1.7

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